

Washington, D.C. 20505

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25 March 1983

The Honorable Jack Brooks
Chairman
Legislation and National Security Subcommittee
of the Committee on Government Operations
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Brooks:


Thank you for your 11 March letter to Bill Casey indicating your concern about the potential impact on national security matters of the Administration's proposal to transfer LANDSAT and METSAT systems to the private sector.

We appreciate your interest and have noted our own concerns on this subject. The Intelligence Community does have an interest in the US maintaining continuity of collection of satellite data useful to national security activities. This includes data processing and distribution effected in an efficient, timely manner. This view has been expressed and recognized in the various stages of deliberations that led to the formulation of the Administration proposal. The Administration has charged Secretary of Commerce Baldrige to determine what aspects of satellite operations can be transferred to the private sector. In making this determination, specific attention will be given to national security considerations. Secretary Baldrige will establish an interagency coordinating and oversight body of senior officials from the affected Federal departments and agencies to ensure that issues of concern to the Intelligence Community, and other relevant Federal and national concerns, are identified and properly addressed. Appropriate stipulations will be drafted for incorporation into any contractual arrangements.

Our Intelligence Community Staff, in collaboration with pertinent elements of the Department of Defense, will directly support the inter-agency coordinating body in developing the terms of reference for commercialization and will ensure that specific national security concerns are addressed. I have instructed the Staff, in concert with the Secretary of Commerce, to forward to your Subcommittee, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Appropriations Committee, copies of the various data relative to national security matters as they are developed.

Once again, let me express our appreciation and thanks for your interest and concern on this important subject.

Sincerely,


John H. McIlhannon
Acting Director

DCI
EXEC
REG

cc: Secretary of Commerce